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*Original Citation:*

*Availability:*

This version is available <http://hdl.handle.net/2318/2041290> since 2024-12-27T16:19:01Z

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## Origen and Eusebius on Ps 73

It is widely known that Eusebius of Caesarea was trained by Pamphilus on the exegetical writings by Origen, as well as on his Biblical enterprise of the *Hexapla*<sup>1</sup>. Scholars have therefore rightly inquired into the ‘Origenian’ influences that can be traced in the Caesarean’s work and thought<sup>2</sup>, although at the same time they highlighted his originality and conscious independence from the Alexandrian’s heritage<sup>3</sup>.

However, as far as the relationship between the two author’s exegesis is concerned, it is still difficult to find a contribution which investigates their hermeneutical approach outlining their specific characteristics, and to evaluate to which extent Eusebius consciously used Origen’s interpretative techniques or distanced himself from them. The first and most compelling reason for this lack of direct comparisons is the complex textual tradition of the two authors’ exegetical works. The Alexandrian’s extensive oeuvre on the Psalter was available up to recent times only in catenary fragments and through nine Latin homilies on Ps 36, 37 and 38 translated by Rufinus<sup>4</sup>. However, thanks to the lucky finding of twenty-nine homilies in Greek in a Munich manuscript by Marina Molin Pradel in 2012, we now dispose of a significant number of complete Greek sermons on ten Psalms, which considerably broaden our knowledge of Origen’s interpretation of the Psalter<sup>5</sup>.

As far as Eusebius is concerned, only less than one third of his *Commentary on the Psalms* has been preserved in a Parisian manuscript, while the extant sections can be read only in catenary fragments<sup>6</sup>. Moreover, most of the work has not been critically edited yet, except for the fragmentary text of the interpretation of some *Psalms*, and, recently, some paragraphs in direct tradition from the Parisian manuscript. Only in late 2022 has Franz Xaver Risch published the critical edition of the catenary fragments on Ps 101-150<sup>7</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> On Eusebius’ formation at Pamphilus’ ‘school’, see Morlet 2011: from the evidence available, the scholar suggests intending the educational circle revolving around Pamphilus as a community of spiritual brothers and friends oriented towards a spiritual life, rather than an institutional teaching. For Eusebius’ life and works see Wallace-Hadrill 1960; Barnes 1981; and the more recent Johnson 2014.

<sup>2</sup> See Kannengiesser 1992.

<sup>3</sup> See Perrone 1996.

<sup>4</sup> On Origen’s works on the Psalter, see Devreesse 1970, 1-88; Nautin 1977, 258; 261-292; Rondeau 1982, 44-63; Prinzivalli 2000; Perrone 2018; the most updated outline can be found in Perrone 2020, 9-24.

<sup>5</sup> On the discovery, see Molin Pradel 2012 and 2014; Perrone 2012. The critical edition of the homilies is Perrone *et al.* 2015. See also the Italian translation with an introduction and a commentary for each homily in Perrone 2020 and 2021a. Important insights on these homilies can be found in the contributions collected in Perrone 2021b. Lastly, for an English translation of the collection see Trigg 2020. Hereafter, I will quote from the *Homilies on the Psalms* (= *HPs*) with Roman numeral for the homily, followed by Arabic one(s) for paragraph(s), specifying in brackets the pages of the critical edition, followed by the pages of the English translation – occasionally modified where I deemed it necessary. The other abbreviations of Origen’s works are taken from Monaci Castagno 2000, XIII-XIV.

<sup>6</sup> On Eusebius’s *Commentary on the Psalms*, see Devreesse 1970, 89-146; Rondeau 1982, 64-75; Curti 1989.

<sup>7</sup> The 23rd volume of the *Patrologia Graeca* series contains the edition of the *Commentary on the Psalms* (= *CPs*) as published by Bernard de Montfaucon, who based it on *catenae* manuscripts (for *CPs* 1-50 and *CPs* 95,2b-118) and the manuscript Paris. Coislin 44 (for *CPs* 51-95,2a), while the 24th volume contains catenary fragments transcribed by Angelo Mai for the last part of the commentary (*CPs* 119-150). Only the section derived from the Parisian manuscript can undoubtedly be ascribed to Eusebius (as well as the text of *CPs* 37 found in PG 30, 81C-104A), while the fragments must be critically evaluated (starting from the surveys in Devreesse 1970, 89-146 and Mühlenberg 1978, 44-284, *passim*). Critical editions of fragments on a specific Psalm or section can be found in: Devreesse 1924, 78-81 (*CPs* 49); Harl, Dorival 1972, 182-473 *passim* (*CPs* 118); Curti 2003, 23-216 *passim* (*CPs* 119-133); Rondeau 1968, 404-409 (*CPs* 140). The critical edition of the work is in preparation at the “Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften” by a team whose sample edition of *CPs* 62,1-2 (PG 23, 600A-604B) and *CPs* 86,1-4 (PG 23, 1040A-1044A) can be found in Bandt, Risch, Villani 2019, 204-211 and 212-217. The critically edited fragments of *CPs* 101-150 are now published in

Despite the troubled state of the textual tradition, it is surprising that no comparison has ever attempted to systematically retrace echoes of Origen's exegesis of the Psalter in Eusebius<sup>8</sup>. Instead, the few contributions on the subject have based the comparison between the approaches of the two authors on generic hermeneutical categories (such as 'letter', 'history', 'allegory') assumed as intrinsically distinctive of their methodologies. In this way, in account of Origen's (supposedly characteristic) tendency to allegorise, Eusebius certainly appears as characterised by his 'literalist' willingness to read the biblical text limiting the application of figural interpretation<sup>9</sup>.

Therefore, in this paper I will consider Origen's and Eusebius's exegesis of Psalm 73 (TM 74), to review their main themes and the techniques they deploy in their interpretation. My aim is to offer an outline on how the two authors comment on a Psalm which evokes the destruction of the Temple of Jerusalem<sup>10</sup>, as well as a comparison of their hermeneutical procedure to throw new light on Eusebius' position in relation to the Origenian exegetical array.

## I. Origen.

Psalm 73 contains a lament of the people addressed to God during the siege of Jerusalem and the destruction of the Temple, the description of which occupies the central verses of the composition. In the end, the psalmist appeals to God praising him for his wonders and urging him to respond to his enemies' attacks and save those who trust him. As for the dating, critics oscillate between the epoch after the destruction of the city in 586 BCE and the Maccabean period<sup>11</sup>.

In the Munich manuscript, we find three *Homilies on Psalm 73*, conforming with Jerome's lists in his transcription from the catalogue of Origen's library appended to the *Life of Pamphilus* written by Eusebius<sup>12</sup>. Origen dedicated each sermon to an almost equal number of verses, commenting Ps 73,1-7 in the first homily, Ps 73,8-15a in the second, and Ps 73,15b-23 in the third. After an invitation to pray to receive the spiritual rain that leads to a fruitful comprehension of the teachings from the Scripture, the Alexandrian starts the explanation of the Psalm read in the assembly by considering the elements of the inscription or title, "*of understanding, of Asaph*" (Ps 73,1a). He highlights how the first one appeals to the attention of the audience for a deep understanding of the content of the Psalm, while the second one indicates that the historical author of the composition is Asaph<sup>13</sup>. Origen then resumes historical events referred by the text:

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Risch 2022. Hereafter, I will quote from the *CPs* specifying the number of Psalm and verses which refers to the sections into which Eusebius divides the explanation of the text, indicating in brackets the respective columns of the *Patrologia Graeca* volume (any differences from the published text are due to my re-examination of the manuscript on the digital reproductions available on the Bibliothèque Nationale de France website). The provisional critical text published at <https://pta.bbaw.de/en/reader/72eb5c10/pta0003.pta020.pta-grcBibex2> unluckily does not comprise the sections of the commentary on Ps 73-76 and 78-81 (last access February 2024). All the translations of the *CPs* are mine.

<sup>8</sup> Though it must be noted that the different genres of the two authors' works can be one of the motivations for the lack of studies. See however Bandt 2011.

<sup>9</sup> See Wallace-Hadrill 1960, 72-99; Barnes 1981, 94-105; Simonetti 1985, 113-124 and 1986; Curti 1989, 193-213. Arguments in favour of a slight but significant shift of perspective can be found in Interi 2022.

<sup>10</sup> A detailed analysis of this theme in *H73Ps I*, on which I rely, has been carried out by Cacciari 2019.

<sup>11</sup> On Ps 73 see Ravasi 1983, 559-573; Schökel, Carniti 1993, 29-45. On its Septuagint version, see Cordes 2004, 73ff.

<sup>12</sup> Jerome, *Epist.* 33,4 (ed. Hilberg 1996, 255-258).

<sup>13</sup> On Origen's preaching activity, technique, and chronology see the fundamental Monaci Castagno 1987; Grappone 2001a and 2001b; and finally, Monaci Castagno 2014, which updates the discussion with the elements derived from the new homilies. As for Origen's interest in also commenting the inscriptions or titles of the Psalms, see Perrone 2018, 138-143.

He has displayed the affairs of Jerusalem, when Asaph prophesied – and tells, as to the letter, what occurred to the people after the captivity. For “*Why, God, would you reject to the end? Has your wrath been provoked against the sheep of your pasture? Remember your gathering, which you acquired from the beginning*” (Ps 73,1) and what follows, fits, as far as the letter goes, the events after the captivity<sup>14</sup>.

Thus, the Alexandrian notes that, on the literal level, the speech of the psalmist refers to the siege of the Jerusalem by the Babylonians and the following captivity of the people. However, before stating his interest in deriving the spiritual meaning of the psalm, Origen observes that “someone might say that it fits not only those events, but also those after the visitation of our Saviour”<sup>15</sup>, thus admitting that the text can also hint at the destruction of the temple by the Romans in 70 CE. The preacher then proceeds to answer the question in the first verse. The simpler believers would argue that God rejects those who he had previously gathered because of their sins, while those who look for a deeper motivation would attribute the cause to the rejection of Jesus Christ. This is, in fact, the reason why Jerusalem is currently still desolated. Lastly, a third explanation would be that “*just as in Adam we all die, and in Christ we are all made alive* (cf. 1Cor 15,22), thus in Adam all have been exiled, and in Christ God restores us all”<sup>16</sup>. The expression “*to the end*” (εἰς τέλος) also sparks a reflection of the different ‘measures’ according to which God rejects someone in proportion to the gravity of their sin, so that, in the case of those who have sinned most grievously, it comes a point where it is not possible for him to push them away even more<sup>17</sup>. Origen then argues that the psalmist is raising a prayer to God to persuade him not to pour out his wrath on sinners, who are compared to a flock because they are humble and worthy of mercy<sup>18</sup>.

As for the following verse (Ps 73,2: “*Remember your gathering, which you acquired at the beginning. You redeemed a rod of your inheritance, this mount Zion, where you settled*”), the preacher does not identify the *gathering* with the Church from the gentiles, nor with the Jews, since neither the latter were chosen by God at the beginning, but only at the time of Moses or Abraham. The phrase must be referred rather to those who God had already justified before creation thanks to his foreknowledge. More specifically, the *beginning* must be intended as Christ himself, according to Prov 8,22 (“*The Lord created me as the beginning of his ways, for his works*”)<sup>19</sup>. According to Origen, Christ’s redeeming role is also referred to in the second part of the verse, so that Zion is interpreted, basing on its etymology, as the rational and contemplative soul which is therefore inhabited by God

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<sup>14</sup> Orig., *H73Ps* I 1 (GCS NF 19, 225; transl. 178): συνειστήκει τὰ τῆς Ἱερουσαλήμ, ὅτε ὁ Ἀσάφ ταῦτα προεφήτευσσε, καὶ λέγει, ὡς πρὸς τὸ ῥητόν, τὰ συμβεβηκότα τῷ λαῷ μετὰ τὴν αἰχμαλωσίαν. Τὸ γὰρ ἵνα τί, ὁ θεός, ἀπόσω εἰς τέλος, ὀργίσθη ὁ θυμός σου ἐπὶ πρόβατα νομῆς σου; μνήσθητι τῆς συναγωγῆς σου, ἧς ἐκτίσω ἀπ’ ἀρχῆς (Ps 73,1), καὶ τὰ ἐξῆς ἀρμόζει, ὅσον ἐπὶ τῇ λέξει, τοῖς πράγμασι τοῖς μετὰ τὴν αἰχμαλωσίαν.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibidem* (GCS NF 19, 225; transl. 178): Εἶποι δ’ ἂν τις ὅτι οὐ μόνον ἐκείνοις ἀλλὰ καὶ τοῖς μετὰ τοῦ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν ἐπιδημίαν.

<sup>16</sup> Orig., *H73Ps* I 2 (GCS NF 19, 226-227; transl. 179): Ὁ μὲν ἀπλούστερος ἐρεῖ τὸ αἴτιον εἶναι τὰ ἀμαρτήματα· ταῦτα γὰρ αἰτία ἐστὶ τοῦ τὸν θεὸν οὕς προσελάβετο ἀποθεῖσθαι. διὸ εἴτερ καὶ ἡμεῖς βουλόμεθα μὴ ἀποσθῆναι ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ, μὴ ἀμαρτάνωμεν. Ὁ δὲ ἤδη τι κἂν ἐπὶ ποσὸν βαθύτερον ὀρῶν ἐρεῖ αἴτιον τοῦ ἀποσθῆναι τὸν λαὸν τὸ τὸν Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν ἀνηρῆσθαι ὑπ’ αὐτῶν. Καὶ γὰρ ἀληθῶς ἐπὶ πλεῖον ἀπόσωτο ὁ θεός τὸν λαὸν μετὰ τὴν Χριστοῦ ἐπιδημίαν καὶ τὰ τετολμημένα κατ’ αὐτοῦ. Πότε γὰρ τοσούτῳ χρόνῳ πεπόνθασι; Πότε οὕτως ἠρημώθη Ἱερουσαλήμ; Πότε τοσούτῳ χρόνῳ τὸ θυσιαστήριον ἤρηψε, τῆς θυσίας καὶ τῶν λατρείων οὐκέτι προσφερομένων ἐπ’ αὐτοῦ; Ἄλλος δὲ τις ἐρεῖ, νοήσας τὰ περὶ τὸν Ἀδὰμ, ὅτι τὸν Ἀδὰμ ἀπόσωτο διὰ τὴν ἀμαρτίαν καὶ ἀπόλαυσιν καὶ ὡσπερ ἐν τῷ Ἀδὰμ πάντες ἀποθνήσκομεν καὶ <ἐν> τῷ Χριστῷ πάντες ζωοποιούμεθα (cf. 1Cor 15,22), οὕτως ἐν τῷ Ἀδὰμ πάντες ἀποκίσθημεν καὶ ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ πάντας ἡμᾶς συλλαμβάνεται ὁ θεός.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibidem* (GCS NF 19, 227-228). According to Origen, it is the action of sinning itself which distances the sinner from God: in this way, the rejection is never definitive in God’s will, as it is also part of the therapeutic plan aiming at the progressive conversion and voluntary reunion of the repentant believer; see the notes to the passage in the critical edition and in Perrone 2020, 439-443.

<sup>18</sup> Orig., *H73Ps* I 3 (GCS NF 19, 228-229).

<sup>19</sup> Orig., *H73Ps* I 4 (GCS NF 19, 229-230).

and his Logos<sup>20</sup>. Until the end of the homily, the Alexandrian comments the Psalm verses in the light of these two themes thus outlined, that is the attacks that Christ had to endure to fulfil his saving mission, and the ones that the faithful's soul must face during its ongoing battle against the forces of evil. The former theme is alluded to especially by the *arrogances* and the *evil deeds* of Ps 73,3 (“*Raise your hands against their arrogances to the end, as many as the enemy did wickedly in the holy*”), committed against him by the devil<sup>21</sup>. The latter theme is instead evoked by the description of the destruction of Jerusalem (Ps 73,5-7), which depicts the attack of the demonic forces striving to penetrate the rational soul with their rational weapons, to destroy the inner sanctuary that one erects to God urging them to commit sin<sup>22</sup>.

Inspired by the words of the Psalm (73,8: “*Their kinship said together, ‘Come, and let us cause all God’s feasts to cease from the earth*”), Origen begins his second homily on Ps 73 developing the theme of the ‘kinship’ that the human soul can establish either with “the powers who work together with us for salvation”, or with the evil ones which lead to sin. The latter case is what happened to the times of Christ, when the demonic forces persuaded the Jews to crucify Jesus, so that they now lament that there is no more sign of the presence of God nor any prophet among them (Ps 73,9: “*We have not seen our signs, there is no longer a prophet, he will know us no longer*”)<sup>23</sup>. However, the preacher also offers an interpretation of the same verses relating to the Christians’ life, by reading them as a warning for everyone not to sin and not to celebrate Jewish feasts, abolished by Christ<sup>24</sup>.

The continuation of the Psalm, comprising a hymnic section to God, is interpreted by Origen recurring to allegory as well. Thus, “*You have smashed the heads of the dragons in the waters*” (Ps 73,13b) is read again as an allusion to the forces of sin overthrown by God when the faithful prays him in the adversities of life, symbolised by the *waters*. Then, the preacher interprets the many heads of the only dragon in the following verse (Ps 73,14: “*You have crushed the heads of the dragon. You have given him as food to the Ethiopians*”) as the heresiarchs (Valentinus, Basilides, Apelles) who all derive from the devil, while the Ethiopians who feed on the flesh of the dragon represent the sinners and, more specifically, the heretics who feed on false beliefs even if they pretend to celebrate eucharist<sup>25</sup>. In a coherent way, the following praises of God’s wonders are explained as disclosing a deeper, spiritual meaning, besides their direct reference to events contained in the historical books. The mention of springs, torrents, and rivers (Ps 73,15: “*You broke forth a spring and torrents; you dried up rivers*”) is developed as an allusion to the divine Logos and his apostles and prophets<sup>26</sup>.

Similarly, in the third homily verse 16 (“*Yours is the day, and yours is the night, You shaped illumination and sun*”) sparks a reflection on God’s days and nights, and the specification that, according to the figurative interpretation (κατὰ τὴν τροπολογίαν), the *illumination* is God’s firstborn, while the sun is his Spirit; but, with regard to the literal meaning (ὅσον δὲ ἐπὶ τῷ ῥητῷ) it alludes to the creation of light that precedes the one of the luminaries in *Genesis*<sup>27</sup>. The following verse (Ps

<sup>20</sup> Orig., *H73Ps* I 5-6 (GCS NF 19, 230-232). On the three terms that Origen uses to define Zion (χρηματιστήριον, ὀραματιστήριον, σκοπευτήριον) see Cacciari 2019, 97-99. The etymologically based interpretation of ‘Zion’ as the ‘contemplative soul’ which Origen often resorts to has been used by him since his *Commentary on Lamentations*, composed in Alexandria; see Marchetto 2015 and 2019. For Origen’s interpretation of the places of Palestine in his *Homilies on Jeremiah* and *Ezekiel* see Interi 2019.

<sup>21</sup> Orig., *H73Ps* I 6-8 (GCS NF 19, 232-235).

<sup>22</sup> Orig., *H73Ps* I 9-10 (GCS NF 19, 235-237).

<sup>23</sup> Orig., *H73Ps* II 1-2 (GCS NF 19, 238-241).

<sup>24</sup> Orig., *H73Ps* II 3 (GCS NF 19, 241-243).

<sup>25</sup> Orig., *H73Ps* II 6-7 (GCS NF 19, 246-249).

<sup>26</sup> Orig., *H73Ps* II 8 (GCS NF 19, 250-251); *H73Ps* III 1 (GCS NF 19, 252-253).

<sup>27</sup> Orig., *H73Ps* III 2-3 (GCS NF 19, 253-256).

73,17a: “*You made all the boundaries of the earth*”) also inspires an articulate explanation in the preacher. Literally (ἐπὶ τῷ ῥητῷ), it may refer to the assignment of each nation to its own angel, according to the doctrine of the angels of the nations that Origen develops from Dt 32,8-9; but in a higher and eschatological sense (εἰ δὲ χρὴ καὶ ἐπαναβαίνειν τῷ λόγῳ) it refers to the moment when God will assign to each one a portion of the earth in the future life according to their merits<sup>28</sup>.

The last verses of the psalm contain an invitation to God both to defend his cause against the foolish enemies who outrage him, and at the same time not to forget those who praise and supplicate him. Origen then interprets them mainly from a moral perspective, based on the ideas that the text offers in terms of scriptural references or parallels. In particular, Ps 73,19a (“*Do not hand over to the beasts a soul that confesses to you*”) prompts him firstly to recall the executions of the martyrs handed over to the beasts, and secondly to reflect on the need to escape the spiritual beasts of sin through a spontaneous confession to the bishop<sup>29</sup>.

To sum up, even if Origen evokes anti-Jewish motives commenting Ps 73, he seems to always go beyond them. The emphasis on the rejection of the Jewish people runs along with the theme of the *translatio religionis* (to which some of the Psalm’s verses easily lend) and of the new salvation found in Christ. The preacher thus deals with different aspects of this new economy: from theological to moral ones, from cosmological to euhological and ecclesiological ones. Moreover, Jews are never the only polemical object of Origen’s reproaches, considering his constant remarks against heterodox beliefs and practices.

## II. Eusebius

In his *Commentary on the Psalms*, Eusebius sets out his interpretation of Ps 73 by dividing it into seven lemmas of different length: Ps 73,1-2b; Ps 73,2c-7; Ps 73,8-9; Ps 73,10-11; Ps 73,12-18a; Ps 73,18-21; Ps 73,22-23<sup>30</sup>. The debt that Eusebius owes to the Alexandrian’s exegesis can already be inferred from the treatment of the title of the Psalm. The bishop immediately observes the exhortation to understanding contained in the inscription (Ps 73,1a: “*of understanding, of Asaph*”), as Origen had already done. However, he also dwells on the lack of further specification regarding the ‘genre’ of the composition, deducing that the absence of indications such as ‘psalm’, ‘song’ or ‘hymn’ is due to the mournful nature of the content, and that the psalm rather comprises a supplication, of the kind that Paul exhorts one to raise in 1 Tim 2,1<sup>31</sup>. These remarks are telling of Eusebius’ almost systematic

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<sup>28</sup> Orig., *H73Ps* III 4 (GCS NF 19, 257-259).

<sup>29</sup> Orig., *H73Ps* III 7 (GCS NF 19, 261-265).

<sup>30</sup> In my opinion, the difference between the two authors in the divisions of the Psalm’s verses might be largely due to the different contexts of their exegesis. Origen preached in front of an audience without determining in advance the length of the Scriptural text, dwelling on passages that he deemed interesting and commenting concisely on others, according both to his sensibility and timing concerns. Eusebius instead conceived his commentary as a written work, therefore choosing in advance how to partition each composition into pericopes before proceeding to comment its verses. To do this, he seemed to divide the psalm into sections according to a logic of thematic or content uniformity: Ps 73,1-2b (the appeal to God to remember his community); Ps 73,2c-7 (the desecration of the sanctuary); Ps 73,8-9 (the enemies’ intentions and the effect of their destruction); Ps 73,10-11 (the questions to God as to how long he will allow the enemies’ offence and withdraw his hand); Ps 73,12-18a (the hymn to God and his power); Ps 73,18-21 (the plea to God to keep his covenant and protect his faithful); Ps 73,22-23 (the exhortation to God to react to the outrages and arrogance of his enemies).

<sup>31</sup> Eus., *CPs* 73,1-2b (PG 23, 852A): Διεγείρει μὲν ἡμᾶς καὶ παρορμᾷ ἐπὶ τὴν τῶν λεγομένων σύνεσιν τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ προφητικόν. Οὔτε δὲ ψαλμὸν ἐπιγράφει συνήθως, οὔτε ᾠδὴν, οὔτε ὕμνον, οὐδέ τι τῶν παραπλησίων, διὰ τὸ σκυθρωπὸν τῶν ἀπαγγελλομένων. Ἐν οἷς δοκεῖ ἔντευξίς περιέχεσθαι, περὶ ἧς ὁ θεῖος ἀπόστολος διεκελεύετο δεῖν λέγων πάντας ἡμᾶς ποιεῖσθαι δεήσεις, προσευχάς, ἐντεύξεις, εὐχαριστίας (cf. 1 Tim 2,1).

interest in a ‘typological classification’ of the genres of the psalms, while Origen’s statements in this sense are rather occasional and sporadic.

Eusebius then points out that this supplication, “prophetically exposing what is to come as if it had already passed”, foretells the events of the last siege of Jerusalem, predicting them when the temple was not even built. The author of the Psalm, Asaph, was a contemporary of David, and he also prophesied about the first assault by the Babylonians in Ps 79 and 82<sup>32</sup>. The proof that the present composition is referring to the final destruction of the temple and city by the Romans is that the rejection of the people has happened “*to the end*”, as stated in Ps 73,1, only at the time of the siege of Jerusalem following the crucifixion of Jesus. This is confirmed by Luke 13,35 and 1Thess 2,16, but most of all by Ps 73,9 itself, which predicts that at that moment no prophet will be sent by God to help them like he did many times in the past<sup>33</sup>. Eusebius thus concludes that “it is possible from these words to admire the virtue of the Scripture inspired by God, which foresaw in advance events that would happen long afterwards thanks to divine foreknowledge”<sup>34</sup>.

The term συναγωγή in Ps 73,2 leads the Caesarean to intend the invocation as pronounced for the people of the Jews at the time of the siege, thus interpreting the word in a strict sense, that is the ‘Synagogue’ as the chosen people that God acquired for himself, and even contrasting its etymology to that of the word ‘Church’ (ἐκκλησία): “But not even the first Synagogue was such, for one was so called because of its gathering in one place, while the other has the privilege of election, the Church”<sup>35</sup>. This mention also elicits the comparison with Ps 21,17-19, which – Eusebius argues – explains the reason for God’s rejection of the Synagogue, despite its originary exclusivity<sup>36</sup>. Pursuing this perspective, the bishop interprets the reference to Zion literally as the mount on which the temple was built, and the following description of the siege as a prophetic account of the actual actions of the Romans.

For example, Eusebius also recurs to the translation of Ps 73,4-6 provided by Symmachus to describe the destruction of the temple, for it offers a clearer and more detailed account of the events, that enriches the explanation. In this way, the *signs* exposed by the enemies are the weapons and the

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<sup>32</sup> *Ibidem* (PG 23, 852A-B): Ἐντυγχάνει γοῦν ὁ λόγος τῷ θεῷ προφητικῶς, τὰ μέλλοντα ὡς παρωχηκότα διεξιῶν καὶ τὴν ἐσχάτην σημαίων πολιορκίαν τῆς Ἱερουσαλὴμ τὴν ὑπὸ Ῥωμαίων γενομένην μετὰ τὴν σωτήριον παρουσίαν. Καὶ ταῦτα μηδὲ συστάντος πω τοῦ τόπου προαναφωνεῖ. Ὁ μὲν γὰρ Ἀσάφ, δι’ οὗ ταῦτα προεφητεύετο, σύγχρονος γέγονεν τῷ Δαυΐδ, Σολομῶν δὲ μετὰ τὴν τοῦ Δαυΐδ τελευτήν οικοδομεῖ τὸν νεῶν. Δύο δὲ πορθήσεις προθεωρήσας τοῦ τόπου, τὴν τε προτέραν τὴν ὑπὸ Βαβυλωνίων γενομένην, καὶ τὴν δευτέραν τὴν ὑπὸ Ῥωμαίων, τὴν μὲν πρώτην διὰ τοῦ οἴκου ψαλμοῦ σημαίνει καὶ διὰ τοῦ πβ’, τὴν δὲ ὑστάτην διὰ τῆς μετὰ χεῖρας προφητείας. This remark is in line with Eusebius’ synthetic description of the Psalm in his *Periochae*, Ps 73 (ed. Bandt, in Bandt, Risch, Villani 2019, 134): Προαναφώνησις τῆς ἐσχάτης Ἰουδαίων πολιορκίας τῆς ἐπὶ Ουεσπασιανοῦ καὶ Τίτου γενομένης.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibidem* (PG 23, 852B-853A): Τέλος γὰρ αὐτοῖς παντελοῦς ἀποπτώσεως οὐδ’ ἄλλοτε γέγονεν ἢ ὅτε ὁ σωτὴρ καὶ κύριος ἡμῶν τὴν κατ’ αὐτῶν ἐξηνέγκατο ἀπόφασιν εἰπών· Ἰδοὺ ἀφίεται ὑμῖν ὁ οἶκος ὑμῶν ἔρημος (Luke 13,35). Οἷς ἀκολούθως καὶ ὁ ἱερὸς ἀπόστολος μετὰ τὴν τῶν πραγμάτων ἐκβασιν γράφων περὶ αὐτῶν ἔλεγεν· Ἐφθασεν δὲ ἐπ’ αὐτοὺς ἡ ὀργὴ εἰς τέλος (1Thess 2,16). Καὶ κατὰ μέρος δὲ τὰ ἐξῆς συμβάντα τῷ τόπῳ ἐπὶ τῆς τῶν Ῥωμαίων πολιορκίας παρίστησιν ὁ παρὼν προφήτης, ἐν οἷς φησιν [...]. Εἰ δὲ λέγοι τις ταῦτα καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν χρόνων τῶν Βαβυλωνίων γεγονέναι, προσεκτέον τοῖς ἐξῆς δι’ ὧν εἴρηται· Τὰ σημεῖα ἡμῶν οὐκ εἶδομεν, οὐκ ἔστιν ἔτι προφήτης, καὶ ἡμᾶς οὐ γνώσεται ἔτι (Ps 73,9). Σημεῖα γὰρ ἦν τοῦ τὸν θεὸν ἐφορᾶν καὶ ἐπισκοπεῖν τὸ Ἰουδαίων ἔθνος τὸ παρέχειν αὐτοῖς προφήτας, ἐπεὶ καὶ ὅτε κακῶς ἔπραττον ὡσπερ ἰατροὺς καὶ σωτήρας αὐτοῖς τοὺς προφήτας ἐφίστη. [...] Πῶς οὖν οἶόν τε ἦν ἐφαρμόζειν τοῖς τότε χρόνοις τὴν παροῦσαν προφητείαν φάσκουσαν· Τὰ σημεῖα ἡμῶν οὐκ εἶδομεν, καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ἔτι προφήτης, καὶ ἡμᾶς οὐ γνώσεται ἔτι (Ps 73,9); Ἀλλὰ γὰρ ταῦτα τέλους ἐτύγχανεν μετὰ τὴν σωτήριον παρουσίαν καὶ τὰς προλεχθείσας αὐτοῦ φωνάς, μεθ’ ἧς οὐκ εἰς μακρὸν ἐπιστάντες Ῥωμαῖοι τὸν τόπον ἠφάνισαν.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibidem* (PG 23, 853B): Ἔστιν δὲ ἐκ τούτων τὴν ἀρετὴν ἀποθαυμάσαι τῆς θεοπνεύστου γραφῆς, ὡς τὰ μακροῖς ὕστερον πραχθέντα χρόνοις προγνώσει θεῖα προεἶληφεν.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibidem* (PG 23, 856A): Ἄλλ’ οὐ τοιαύτη καὶ ἡ προτέρα ἐτύγχανεν συναγωγὴ· ἡ μὲν γὰρ ἐκ τοῦ κατὰ τὸ αὐτὸ συνάγεσθαι οὕτως ὀνομασμένη, ἡ δὲ τὸ ἐξάριτον παριστῶσα τῆς ἐκλογῆς ἢ ἐκκλησίας.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibidem* (PG 23, 856A-B).

military insignia, the tabernacle is the actual dwelling of the name of God built in the temple<sup>37</sup>. The reference to the *feast* (Ps 73,4) is seen as historically realised with the condemnation of Jesus in the days of Passover, as well as the related prophecy of Am 8,10 (“*I will change your feasts into sorrow, and your songs into tears*”), which was also quoted by Origen<sup>38</sup>. Eusebius interprets Ps 73,8-9 as the explication of the Romans’ intention to eradicate any chance for the Jewish people to celebrate God’s festivities by destroying his sanctuary, and the consequent definitive absence of prophets among them after John the Baptist is the ultimate proof of God’s abandonment of the Jewish people, and therefore of the fact that the predicted events concern the destruction of 70 CE, as Eusebius has already stated at the beginning of the commentary<sup>39</sup>.

As for Ps 73,10-11 (“*How long, God, will the enemy offend, the opponent will provoke your name to the end? Why do you withdraw your hand, and your right hand from the middle of your bosom to the end?*”), Eusebius offers a reading which corresponds to Origen’s one, arguing that God’s *bosom* is full of good things, and linking it to John 1,18 to prove that also Christ resides there, just as Origen did<sup>40</sup>.

<sup>37</sup> Eus., *CPs* 73,2c-7 (PG 23, 856C-D): Τοῦτο δ’ εἰπὼν ἐξῆς θεσπίζει τὰ συμβησόμενα τῷ τόπῳ, τὰ μέλλοντα ἔσεσθαι ὡς παρωχηκότα συνήθως προφωνῶν. Λέγει δ’ οὖν· Καὶ ἐνεκαυχήσαντο οἱ μισοῦντές σε ἐν μέσῳ τῆς ἑορτῆς σου (Ps 73,4a)· ἢ κατὰ τὸν Ἀκύλαν Ἐβρυχήσαντο οἱ πολέμιοί σου ἐν μέσῳ τῆς συνταγῆς σου. Ἔθεντο τὰ σημεῖα αὐτῶν σημεῖα, καὶ οὐκ ἔγνωσαν, ὡς εἰς τὴν ἔξοδον ὑπεράνω (Ps 73,4b-5)· ὁ δὲ σαφέστερον ἠρμήνευσεν ὁ Σύμμαχος εἰπὼν· Ἔθηκαν τὰ σημεῖα αὐτῶν ἐπισήμως γνώριμα κατὰ τὴν εἴσοδον ἐπάνω. Ἀλλὰ καὶ ἀντὶ τοῦ Ὡς ἐν δρυμῶ ζύλων ἀξίναις ἔκοψαν τὰς θύρας αὐτῆς ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ ἐν πέλυκι καὶ λαξευτηρίῳ κατέρραξαν αὐτὴν (Ps 73,6), πάλιν ὁ Σύμμαχος Ἐν ἀρμένιοις ζυλίνοις ἀξίναις τῶνδε καὶ τὰς πύλας αὐτῆς ὁμοῦ ἐν μοχλοῖς καὶ δικράνοις κατέρριψαν. Σημεῖα δὲ τῶν πολεμίων τίνα ἦν, ἄπερ ἐπισήμως πρὸ τῶν εἰσοδῶν ἔθηκαν, ἢ τὰ πολεμικὰ ὄργανα καὶ πελέκεις καὶ ἀξίνας καὶ τοιαῦτα δόρατά τε καὶ ὄπλα; Εἰκὸς δὲ καὶ τὰς σημεῖας τὰς πρὸ τῶν στρατοπέδων φερομένας διὰ τούτων δηλοῦσθαι. For the hexaplaric variants here quoted, see Field 1875, 216-217.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibidem* (PG 23, 857A-B). See Orig., *H73Ps* I 8 (GCS NF 19, 234-235).

<sup>39</sup> Eus., *CPs* 73,8-9 (PG 23, 857B-860B): [...] Πάλαι μὲν γὰρ καθ’ ἕκαστον καιρὸν καὶ κατὰ γενεὰς καὶ κατὰ διαδοχὰς τῶν ἡμετέρων πατέρων προφήται συνῆσαν αὐτοῖς πολιορκουμένοις καὶ εἰς αἰχμαλωσίαν ἀπαγομένοις· ὅπερ ἦν μέγιστον δεῖγμα καὶ σημεῖον τοῦ μὴ ἀνεπισκόπους αὐτοὺς ὑπάρχειν. ἢ γοῦν προνοητικῆ τῶν ὄλων δύναμις ὡσπερ ἰατροὺς ἐν ταῖς ἐσχάταις συμφοραῖς τοὺς προφήτας τῷ τότε λαῷ καθίστη, καὶ ταῦτα ἦν τοῦ θεοῦ τὰ σημεῖα. Νῦν δὲ εἰς ἡμᾶς γινόμενα ὅτε τὰ προλεχθέντα δι’ ἔργων χωρεῖ Τὰ σημεῖα ἡμῶν οὐκ εἶδομεν· δι’ ὃ οὐκ ἔστιν ἔτι προφήτης, καὶ ἡμᾶς οὐ γνώσεται ἔτι (Ps 73,9). Εἰ μὲν γὰρ πρὸς καιρὸν βραχὺν διέλιπον οἱ προφήται εἶτα μετὰ ταῦτα πάλιν ἀνεφάνησαν, οὐκ ἂν ἐλέγετο· καὶ ἡμᾶς οὐ γνώσεται ἔτι (Ps 73,9b)· νῦν δὲ ἐπειδὴ μετὰ τὰ κατὰ τοῦ σωτήρος τολμηθέντα αὐτοῖς, Ῥωμαίων ἐπιστάντων καὶ τὸν τόπον ἐκ βάρων ἐρημωσάντων, οὐδαμοῦ προφήται παρήσαν τοῖς πολιορκουμένοις. ἀλλ’ οὐδὲ ἐν τοῖς μετὰ ταῦτα χρόνοις γεγόνασιν, οὐδ’ ἡμελλον εἰσαυθίς ποτε ἀναστήσεσθαι [...]. Notice that in this case Eusebius interprets the word *σημεῖα* as figuratively referring to the prophets as signs of benevolence and protection from God.

<sup>40</sup> Eus., *CPs* 73,10-11 (PG 23, 860C-D): Ἡ δὲ τοῦ λόγου διάνοια τοῦτον ἔχει τὸν νοῦν· ὁ κόλπος τοῦ θεοῦ ἀγαθῶν ἐστὶ πλήρης, διὸ λέλεκται· μονογενῆς υἱὸς ὁ ὢν εἰς τὸν κόλπον τοῦ πατρὸς, ἐκεῖνος ἐξηγήσατο (John 1,18). Καὶ ἔστιν ἀπόρητος οὗτος τῆς πατρικῆς θεότητος θησαυρὸς καὶ πλήρωμα τῶν ἀγαθῶν ἀπάντων, ἐξ ὧν δίδωσι τὰ χαρίσματα τοῖς ἀξίοις αὐτοῦ. Ἐπεὶ τοίνυν ἐκ μέσου τοῦ κόλπου τὰ χαρίσματα τοῖς ἀξίοις δωρεῖται ἐκτείνων εἰς αὐτοὺς τὴν ἑαυτοῦ δεξιάν, ἀπὸ δὲ τῶν μὴ ἀξίων ἀποστρέφει τὴν χεῖρα τὴν δεξιάν, μηδὲν αὐτοῖς τῶν ἐν αὐτῷ δηλωθέντι κόλπῳ τεταμιευμένων ἀγαθῶν δωρούμενος. εἰκότως πυνθάνεται λέγων· ἵνα τί ἀποστρέφεις τὴν χεῖρά σου καὶ τὴν δεξιάν σου ἐκ μέσου τοῦ κόλπου σου εἰς τέλος; (Ps 73,11). “The sense of the discourse has this meaning: the bosom of God is full of good things; therefore, it has been said: *the only begotten Son, who is God and is in the bosom of the Father, it is he who has made him known* (John 1,18). And ineffable is this treasure of the Father’s divinity and fullness of all good things, from which he bestows graces on those worthy of him. Therefore, since from the midst of the bosom he bestows graces on the worthy by stretching out his right hand to them, he withdraws his right hand, giving them nothing of those goods kept in the same revealed bosom. Reasonably he asks, saying: *Why do you withdraw your hand and your right hand from the middle of your bosom to the end?* (Ps 73,11)”. See Orig., *H73Ps* II 4 (GCS NF 19, 244): Ὅτε μὲν ἐπισκοπεῖ ὁ θεός, ἢ χεῖρ αὐτοῦ ἀπὸ τοῦ κόλπου προφέρει τὰ ἀγαθὰ—ταῦτα δὲ συμβολικῶς λέγεται—καὶ δίδωσιν ἡμῖν ἐκ τῶν αὐτοῦ κόλπων· ὅπου δὲ οὐκ ἐπισκοπεῖ, οὐδὲ δίδωσιν ἐκ τῶν κόλπων τὸν Χριστόν. Μονογενῆς γὰρ θεός, ὁ ὢν εἰς τὸν κόλπον τοῦ πατρὸς, ἐκεῖνος ἐξηγήσατο (John 1,18). Ἐὰν οὖν τὸν Χριστόν μὴ εἶδῃς καὶ αισθάνῃς ὅτι κενὸς εἶ αὐτοῦ, πλήρης δὲ ἀμαρτημάτων, καὶ σὺ εὗξαι καὶ εἰπέ· ἵνα τί ἀποστρέφεις τὴν χεῖρά σου καὶ τὴν δεξιάν σου ἐκ μέσου τοῦ κόλπου σου εἰς τέλος; (Ps 73,11).

One of the clearest examples of Eusebius' orientation can be found in his treatment of the hymnic section of the Psalm. The bishop comments that the passage, after beginning with the stating that God will give his Salvation for all humanity<sup>41</sup>, reminds the wonders that he had already done. First of all, for the interpretation of Ps 73,13 (“*You have strengthened the sea with your power, You have smashed the heads of the dragons in the waters*”) Eusebius recurs to Symmachus' and Theodotion's translations (respectively: “*You have scattered the sea with your strength*” and “*You have separated the sea with your power*”) to argue that it refers to the separation of the Red sea, while the *heads of the dragons* represent the commanders of the Egyptians (or of the Pharaoh identified in the *dragon* of the following verse)<sup>42</sup>.

As for Ps 73,14 (“*You have crushed the heads of the dragon. You have given him as food to the Ethiopians*”), Eusebius' explanation of the verse is not completely clear: he seems to suggest that it refers to the dead bodies of the Egyptians left on the shore as a meal for birds, evidently understanding the ethnonym *Ethiopians* as somehow indicating the birds, although he swiftly mentions its translation by Aquila (“*to those who will go out*”), Theodotion (“*to the uttermost*”), and the fifth edition (“*to him who has gone out*”) without explaining if further<sup>43</sup>. In a coherent way, Ps 73,15 (“*You broke forth a spring and torrents; you dried up rivers of Etham*”) is historically explained as referring to Moses' miracle of the water brought forth from the rock and to the miracle of the Jordan dried up for the Israelites to pass<sup>44</sup>.

In the following verses (Ps 73,16-17: “*Yours is the day, and yours is the night, you shaped illumination and sun. You made all the boundaries of the earth, summer and spring, you shaped them*”) Eusebius sees a continuation of the theme of the omnipotence of God, who can transform anything in its opposite. Consequently, just as God has regulated the course of the stars with laws, leading to the alternation of day and night, and just as he has divided eternity into different parts, allowing for the change of the seasons, in the same way the psalmist solicits him to hear his prayer and to provide those who implore him with a way out of the ruin of the sacking of Jerusalem<sup>45</sup>. Therefore, Eusebius evokes here the moment of the creation of the world only to refer to the cosmic laws that rule celestial bodies, while Origen derived from Ps 73,16b an exegesis of trinitarian nature on the account of the creation.

<sup>41</sup> Eus., *CPs* 73,12-18a (PG 23, 861A-C).

<sup>42</sup> *Ibidem* (PG 23, 861C-D): Εἶτα διδάσκει ἐξῆς ὅποιας ἤδη πάλαι πρότερον ὁ θεὸς κατεργάσατο θαυματουργίας λέγων· Σὺ ἐκραταίωσας ἐν τῇ δυνάμει σου τὴν θάλασσαν (Ps 73,13a). Ἀντὶ δὲ τοῦ Σὺ ἐκραταίωσας, ὁ Σύμμαχος Σὺ διεσκέδασας τῇ ἰσχύϊ σου τὴν θάλασσαν ἠρμήνευσεν. Καὶ μοι δοκεῖ διὰ τούτων ὡς πρὸς τὴν ἱστορίαν σημαίνειν τὴν ἐπὶ Μωσέως γενομένην διόδον τοῦ λαοῦ διὰ τῆς Ἐρυθρᾶς θαλάσσης. Διὸ κατὰ μὲν τὸν Σύμμαχον εἴρηται Σὺ διεσκέδασας τῇ ἰσχύϊ σου τὴν θάλασσαν· κατὰ δὲ τὸν Θεοδοτίωνα Σὺ διέστησας ἐν τῇ δυνάμει σου τὴν θάλασσαν. Εἶτα τοὺς Αἰγυπτίους καὶ τὸν Φαραῶ αἰνίττεσθαί μοι δοκεῖ φάσκων· Σὺ συνέτριψας τὰς κεφαλὰς τῶν δρακόντων ἐπὶ τοῦ ὕδατος· σὺ συνέθλασας τὰς κεφαλὰς τοῦ δράκοντος (Ps 73,13b-14a). δράκοντα μὲν τὸν Φαραῶ, κεφαλὰς δὲ αὐτοῦ τοὺς ὑπ' αὐτὸν ἄρχοντας αἰνιττόμενος· ἢ δράκοντας τοὺς Αἰγυπτίους, κεφαλὰς δὲ αὐτῶν τοὺς τριστάτας καὶ τοὺς ἡγουμένους αὐτῶν ὀνομάζων.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibidem* (PG 23, 861D): Τὸ δὲ Ἐδωκας αὐτὸν βρῶμα λαοῖς τοῖς Αἰθίοψιν (Ps 73,14b), εἶποι ἂν τις τὰ νεκρὰ σώματα αὐτῶν, ἐκβρασθέντα τῆς θαλάσσης, βορὰν γεγονέναι τοῖς πετεινοῖς τοῦ οὐρανοῦ. Ἀντὶ δὲ τοῦ τοῖς Αἰθίοψιν, ὁ μὲν Ἀκύλας τοῖς ἐξέλευσόμενοις, ὁ δὲ Θεοδοτίων τῷ ἐσχάτῳ, καὶ ἡ πέμπτη ἔκδοσις τῷ ἐξεληλυθότι, ἠρμήνευσαν. For the hexaplaric variants here quoted, see Field 1875, 218.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibidem* (PG 23, 861D-864A).

<sup>45</sup> *Ibidem* (PG 23, 864C): Παραστήσας ὁ προφήτης ὅποια εἴργασται θαύματα ὁ πρὸ αἰῶνων βασιλεὺς θεὸς ἔτι καὶ ταῦτα προστίθησι λέγων· Σὴ ἔστιν ἡ ἡμέρα, καὶ σὴ ἔστιν ἡ νύξ (Ps 73,16a). Τὴν γὰρ τῶσαύτην τῶν πραγμάτων μεταβολὴν σὺ μόνος ὁ παντοδύναμος εἰργάσω. Ὡς γὰρ τὴν στερέμινον πέτραν εἰς ῥευστὴν οὐσίαν μεταβαλὼν, πηγὰς καὶ χειμάρρους ἐξ αὐτῆς εἰργάσω καὶ ἀνάπαλιν τὰ τῶν ποταμῶν ῥεύματα εἰς τὸ ἐναντίον καταστήσας ἐξήρανας, οὕτω καὶ τὴν ἡμέραν ὅτε θέλεις νυκτοποιεῖς, ἔμπαλιν τε τὴν νύκτα μετατρέπεις εἰς ἡμέραν. αὐτὸς καὶ φωστῆρας ἐν οὐρανῷ κατηστέρησας αὐτοῖς, καὶ ἡλίῳ διέταξας δρόμους, ὄρους τε τῷ παντὶ νομοθετήσας, ὥσπερ μεθορίοις διεῖλας τὸν σύμπαντα αἰῶνα κατακερματίσας εἰς διάφορα τμήματα τοὺς τοῦ παντὸς ἐνιαυτοῦ καιροῦς. [...]

Eusebius paraphrases the verses 18-21 without much elaboration, reading them as a plea to spare the Lord's *poor ones*, that is his disciples and apostles, on the basis of Mark 5,3; Isa 61,1; Rom 9,3-4<sup>46</sup>. The bishop seals his commentary on the last two verses, which again contain an invitation to God to defend his cause against the arrogance of his enemies, by quickly paraphrasing them and adding the translation given by Symmachus. Finally, he observes that the psalm closes without any promise of goods or response to the psalmist's requests, because of God's irrevocable decision to reject the Jewish people after the killing of Christ<sup>47</sup>.

Overall, Eusebius' exegesis of Ps 73 revolves around the event of the siege of Jerusalem in 70 CE. When he evokes other themes, he refers to historical events or concrete phenomena the psalm refers to, without any explicit interest for moral or spiritual teachings.

### III. Conclusion: similarities and differences

The mere juxtaposition of the two authors' exegesis of the destruction of Jerusalem would be rather telling of their different perspectives, which in my opinion are not necessarily contrasting. In this last paragraph, in fact, while I will pinpoint some characteristics of the approach of each of them two, I will also provide an explanation for this divergence, which I think also arises from the texts themselves, if we ought to read them without any expectations of what we should find in them.

In his treating of the siege of Jerusalem prophesied in Psalm 73, Origen is coherent with his well-known method of finding the explanation which best conveys a message useful for the spiritual progress of the listener. This endeavour is even more understandable if one considers the context of the Alexandrian's preaching, who explains the biblical text to an audience of different training and composition<sup>48</sup>, although this does not imply a simplification or the abstention from doctrinal reflections, as the new homilies have proved with new examples<sup>49</sup>. Therefore, it is comprehensible how his interpretation of the destruction of Jerusalem recurrently proposes the tropological reading of the name of the city based on its etymology, which surpasses – without denying it – the typically anti-Jewish treatment of the motive stemming from the apologetical tradition. Origen rather connects the theme of the fall of the city to the reflection on the soul's struggle against the forces of sin, and thus to the agonistic context of moral commitment typical of Origen's anthropology<sup>50</sup>. Thus, the anti-Judaic polemic is not the dominant topic of the Alexandrian's treatment of the fall of Jerusalem,

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<sup>46</sup> Eus., *CPs* 73,18a-21 (PG 23, 864D-865B).

<sup>47</sup> Eus., *CPs* 73,22-23 (PG 23, 865C-D).

<sup>48</sup> See Monaci Castagno 1987, 81-93.

<sup>49</sup> See the overall considerations by Simonetti 2016, and by Perrone 2021b, in the contributions collected in the whole third section titled “„Und der ganze Mensch wird zum Gott“: theologische Aspekte und spirituelle Perspektiven”, 251-371.

<sup>50</sup> See the conclusions by Cacciari 2019, 107. This contribution also signals parallel passages of the interpretation of this Psalm, and so does the critical edition of the homilies and the commentary by Perrone 2020, 434-525, although, as the scholar notes (436), the first verses are quoted few times by the Alexandrian, unlike those from v. 12 onwards (according to the online repertory “Bibindex”, Ps 73,3-8.10-12.15.18.20-23 are mentioned by Origen only in these homilies). The theme of the fall of Jerusalem also recurs frequently in the homilies dedicated to the prophetic books of *Jeremiah* and *Ezekiel*. In these cycles of preaching, Origen often insists on the definitive aspect of the condemnation inflicted on the Jews with the final destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, sometimes linking the theme to the reflection on the magnanimity shown by God in delaying as long as possible the final punishment for the misbehaviour of the people (*Hier* VII 1; *Hier* XIII 1; *Hier* XIV 13-14), sometimes to the proportionality of the punishments in relation to the sins committed (*HEz* V 3-4). In any case, such observations are linked to the allegorical reading of the city of Jerusalem as a soul besieged by sin and which Origen invites to repent in order not to incur divine punishment.

because along the polemical remarks against Judaism, Origen always evokes the theme of the spiritual growth of his Christian community.

Notwithstanding the different approaches, it is not unreasonable to assert that, in the case of Psalm 73, the comparison of Eusebius' interpretation of the psalm with the reading given by the Alexandrian is prompted by Eusebius himself. At the end of his interpretation of Ps 73,15, the Caesarean resumes an explanation of the preceding verses different than the one he just proposed:

Let this be said for the letter. But one who casts himself upon the passages figuratively will trace these expressions back to the occult and invisible powers, saying that these are the *dragons* named here (cf. Ps 73,13b), that the *sea* is figuratively their abode (cf. Ps 73,13a), and that by the many-headed *dragon* is alluded to the same prince of evil spirits, about whom it might be said that it has been said *You have crushed the heads of the dragon. You have given him as food to the Ethiopians* (Ps 73,14). He will also investigate certain *Ethiopians* in accordance with the laws of allegory, saying that these are the souls who have become black, and he will also say that they eat the said *dragon*, in a manner similar to those who eat the flesh of the Word of salvation; consistent with these, he will also attempt to explain in a still more figurative manner the *springs* that flow in *currents* and the *rivers* that dry up (cf. Ps 73,15). But we, having explained the meaning to the letter, will turn to the following<sup>51</sup>.

In a 2006 article which investigates the exegetical implication of the Ethiopic ethnicity, Aaron P. Johnson had already convincingly argued that in the present passage Eusebius is hinting at Origen's tropological interpretation of the *Ethiopians* as the souls who have been blackened by sin, which can be found in many works of the Alexandrian<sup>52</sup>. However, in light of the recent discovery, this quote also demonstrates that the Caesarean is referring precisely to the Alexandrian's interpretation of the passage put forward in the second homily on Ps 73, of which he orderly sums up all the essential elements.

In the first place, this bears witness to the bishop's profound knowledge of Origen's homiletical work, which he evidently considered in his own exegesis, even if he did not limit himself to slavishly repeating it. What is more, this passage is in my opinion also illustrative of the dialectical relationship that Eusebius has with Origen on the exegetical level. This remark of Eusebius, rather than a real rejection or elimination of the tropological interpretation of the verses<sup>53</sup>, acts as a summary and reference to a type of interpretation of the passage that he considers plausible, but that clearly does not correspond to the primary exegetical orientation of his commentary<sup>54</sup>. Instead, in the *Commentary on the Psalms* Eusebius aims at uncovering the prophetic message of the composition pinpointing exactly the concrete events of the history of salvation which the psalmist has foretold. In this case,

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<sup>51</sup> Eus., *CPs* 73,12-18a (PG 23, 864A-B): Καὶ ταῦτα μὲν ὡς πρὸς τὴν λέξιν εἰρήσθω. Τροπικῶς δ' ἂν τις ἐπιβαλὼν τοῖς τόποις ἀνοίσει ταῦτα ἐπὶ δυνάμεις ἀφανεῖς καὶ ἀοράτους, αὐτὰς εἶναι λέγων τοὺς δράκοντας (cf. Ps 73,13b) τοὺς ἐνταῦθα ὀνομασμένους θάλασσαν τε (cf. Ps 73,13a) τροπικῶς τὸ τούτων οἰκητήριον, αὐτὸν τε τὸν ἄρχοντα τῶν πονηρῶν πνευμάτων σημαίνεσθαι διὰ τοῦ πολυκεφάλου δράκοντος, περὶ οὗ φησεῖεν τις εἰρήσθαι τὸ *Σὺ συνέθλασας τὰς κεφαλὰς τοῦ δράκοντος, ἔδωκας αὐτὸν βρῶμα λαοῖς τοῖς Αἰθίοψιν* (Ps 73,14). Ζητήσῃ δὲ ὁ τοιοῦτος καὶ τινας Αἰθίοπας νόμους ἀλληγορίας, τοὺς τὰς ψυχὰς μεμελανωμένους φάσκων εἶναι· οὓς δὲ καὶ ἐσθίειν ἐρεῖ τὸν προλεχθέντα δράκοντα, ἀναλόγως τοῖς ἐσθίουσιν τοῦ σωτηρίου λόγου τὰς σάρκας· ἀκολουθῶς δὲ τούτοις καὶ πηγὰς ῥηγνυμένας εἰς χειμάρρους καὶ ποταμοὺς ἀποξηρανομένους (cf. Ps 73,15) τροπικώτερον ἀποδοῦναι πειράσεται. Ἄλλ' ἡμεῖς, πρὸς λέξιν τὴν διάνοιαν ἀποδεδωκότες, ἐπὶ τὰ ἐξῆς διαβησόμεθα.

<sup>52</sup> Johnson 2006, in particular 183-185.

<sup>53</sup> As Johnson 2006, 184, believes.

<sup>54</sup> Considering how Eusebius accurately summarises the essential points of the interpretation that Origen develops in no less than three paragraphs of his homily (see Orig., *H73Ps* II 6-8 [GCS NF 19, 247-251]), it is telling, to say the least, that he neither makes explicit the reasons for his alleged rejection of the Alexandrian's explanation, nor even swiftly comments on its absurdity or impossibility.

Eusebius appears as even more disposed, in principle, to allegory, if one bears in mind Origen's warning against literal interpretation in commenting this passage specifically<sup>55</sup>.

This programmatic perspective explains the bishop's interest in the historical aspects of the Psalm throughout its whole explanation in this commentary, as opposed to his rare but significant quotes of Ps 73 verses in other works. It is rather telling that, interpreting Job 9,7-8 in the *Demonstratio Evangelica*, Eusebius had previously quoted Ps 73,13b-14a as referring to Christ's walking on the sea as a symbolical action of his triumph over the forces of evil<sup>56</sup>. As for the verses describing the destruction of Jerusalem, the bishop had already referred them to the derelict state of the Church before Constantine's triumph in his long panegyric for the dedication of the basilica of Tyre in his *Ecclesiastical History*<sup>57</sup>. However, in the *Demonstratio Evangelica* Eusebius quoted the first seven verses of Ps 73, together with Ps 78,1-2, to show how the book of *Psalms* also contained predictions of events that would realise after their composition. In this occasion, though, the Caesarean argued that the events predicted by Psalm 73 were fulfilled during both the destruction by the Babylonians and the one by the Romans<sup>58</sup>, and therefore proposed an interpretation in line with that of the

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<sup>55</sup> Orig., *H73Ps* II 7 (GCS NF 19, 249-250).

<sup>56</sup> Eus., *Demonstratio Evangelica* IX 12,4-5 (GCS 23, 431): ἦν δὲ καὶ τοῦτο ἄλλου τινὸς μείζονος σύμβολον, νοουμένης ἑτέρας θαλάσσης, ἐν ἣ λέγεται δράκων τις εἶναι πεποιημένος ἐγκαταπαίζεσθαι ὑπὸ τῶν ἀγγέλων (Job 41,25) τοῦ θεοῦ, ἐφ' ἣν καὶ αὐτὴν ὁ σωτὴρ καὶ κύριος ἡμῶν ἐμπεριπατήσας, τὴν κεφαλὴν τοῦ αὐτόθι δράκοντος καὶ τῶν λοιπῶν τῶν ὑποβεβηκότων δρακόντων λέγεται συντετριφέναι κατὰ τὸ σὺ συνέθλασας τὰς κεφαλὰς τῶν δρακόντων ἐπὶ τοῦ ὕδατος, καὶ σὺ συνέθλασας τὰς κεφαλὰς τοῦ δράκοντος (Ps 73,13b-14a), σαφῶς ἑτέρας νοουμένης θαλάσσης, περὶ ἧς αὐτὸς πάλιν ἐν ψαλμῷ φησιν· ἦλθον εἰς τὰ βάθη τῆς θαλάσσης (Ps 68,3), καὶ πρὸς τὸν Ἰάβ, τὰ περὶ ἑαυτοῦ διεξιὼν, ἦλθες δὲ ἐπὶ πηγὴν θαλάσσης, ἐν δὲ ἴγνεσιν ἀβύσσου περιπάτησας; ἀνοίγονται δὲ σοι φόβῳ πύλαι θανάτου, πυλωροὶ δὲ ἄδου ἰδόντες σε ἔπηζαν; (Job 38,16-17) εἰκότως οὖν κὰν τῷ καθ' ἡμᾶς βίῳ ἐπιβάς τῇ θαλάττῃ, καὶ τοῖς ἀνέμοις ἐπιτιμήσας καὶ τῷ κλύδωνι, τὰ σύμβολα τῶν ἀπορρητοτέρων ἐπιτελεῖ. "And this was a symbol of something greater, that other spiritual sea, in which a dragon is said to have been *made to be mocked by the angels* (Job 41,25) of God, on which also our Lord and Saviour walked and is said to have crushed the head of the dragon therein and of the other subject dragons, according to the words, "*Thou hast bruised the heads of the dragons in the water, and thou hast bruised the heads of the dragon*" (Ps 73,13b-14a): clearly of another spiritual sea of which He says again in the *Psalms*, "I went into the depths of the sea" (Ps 68,3). And recounting to Job the things concerning himself: *Hast thou gone to the spring of the sea, and hast thou walked in the steps of the depth? The gates of death did they open to thee in fear, and did the porters of Hades fear when they saw thee?* (Job 41,25) Reasonably, when He walked on the sea in our human life, and rebuked the winds and the waves, He fulfilled the symbols of something unspeakable" (transl. – slightly modified – by Ferrar 1920, 177).

<sup>57</sup> Eus., *Historia Ecclesiastica* X 4,33.58 (GCS NF 6/3, 872-873.879): καὶ τάδε μὲν λόγοις πάλαι προθεσπισθέντα βίβλοις ἱεραῖς καταβέβλητο, τὰ γε μὴν ἔργα οὐκέτ' ἀκοαῖς, ἀλλ' ἔργοις ἡμῖν παραδέδοται. ἡ ἔρημος ἦδε, ἡ ἄνυδρος, ἡ χήρα καὶ ἀπερίστατος, ἧς ὡς ἐν δρυμῶ ζύλων ἀζίναις ἐξέκοψαν τὰς πύλας, ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ ἐν πέλυκι καὶ λαξευτηρίῳ συνέτριψαν αὐτήν, ἧς καὶ τὰς βίβλους διαφθείραντες ἐνεπύρισαν ἐν πυρὶ τὸ ἁγιαστήριον τοῦ θεοῦ, εἰς τὴν γῆν ἐβεβήλωσαν τὸ σκῆνωμα τοῦ ὀνόματος αὐτοῦ (Ps 73,6-8), ἣν ἐτρύγησαν πάντες οἱ παραπορευόμενοι τὴν ὁδὸν προκαθελόντες αὐτῆς τοὺς φραγμοὺς, ἣν ἐλυμήνατο ὅς ἐκ δρυμοῦ καὶ μονιῶς ἄγριος κατενεμήσατο (Ps 79,13-14), Χριστοῦ δυνάμει παραδόξῳ νῦν, ὅτε θέλει αὐτός, γέγονεν ὡς κρίνον (Is 35,1)· ἐπεὶ καὶ τότε αὐτοῦ νεύματι, ὡς ἂν προκηδομένου πατρός, ἐπαιδεύετο· ὃν γὰρ ἀγαπᾷ κύριος, παιδεύει, μαστιγοῖ δὲ πάντα νιὸν ὃν παραδέχεται (Προν 3,12). [...] πεπτωκυῖαν δὴτα αὐτὴν ἐκείνην τὴν κατ' εἰκόνα θεοῦ κατασκευασθεῖσαν ἐλυμήνατο οὐχ ὅς οὗτος ὁ ἐκ δρυμοῦ (cf. Ps 79,14) τοῦ παρ' ἡμῖν ὄρατοῦ, ἀλλὰ τις φθοροποιὸς δαίμων καὶ θῆρες ἄγριοι νοητοί, οἱ καὶ τοῖς πάθεσιν οἷα πεπτωκωμένοις τῆς σφῶν κακίας βέλεσιν αὐτὴν ἐξυφάσαντες, ἐνεπύρισαν ἐν πυρὶ τὸ θεῖον ὄντως ἁγιαστήριον τοῦ θεοῦ εἰς τὴν γῆν τε ἐβεβήλωσαν τὸ σκῆνωμα τοῦ ὀνόματος αὐτοῦ (Ps 73,7), εἶτα πολλῶ τῷ προσχώματι τὴν ἀθλίαν κατορύξαντες, εἰς ἀνέλπιστον πάσης περιέτρεψαν σωτηρίας.

<sup>58</sup> Eus., *Demonstratio Evangelica* X 1,9-10 (GCS 23, 447-448): τούτων δὲ τὰ μὲν πρῶτα, λέγω δὲ τὰ ἀπὸ τοῦ ἑβδομηκοστοῦ τρίτου ψαλμοῦ, εἶρητο βασιλεύοντος ἔτι τοῦ Δαβίδ, πρὸ τοῦ τὸν ναὸν ὑπὸ Σολομῶνος κατασκευασθῆναι· τέλος δὲ ἔτυχεν οὐκ ἄλλοτε ἢ πρῶτον μὲν ἐπὶ τῆς Βαβυλωνίων πολιορκίας, δευτέρον δὲ ἐπὶ τοῦ Ῥωμαϊκοῦ πρὸς Ἰουδαίους πολέμου. (10) ἕκαστα γὰρ τῶν εἰρημένων ἐπληροῦτο ἐπὶ τε τῆς πρώτης καὶ δευτέρας τοῦ ἱεροῦ κατασκαφῆς, προγνωσθέντα καὶ ἀναφωνηθέντα ἐν τοῖς εἰρημένοις ψαλμοῖς ὑπὸ τοῦ Ἀσάφ. "The first of these passages, I mean the one from Psalm lxxiii, was spoken in David's reign before the building of Solomon's Temple, and it was only fulfilled the first time by the siege by the Babylonians, and the second time in the Roman war against the Jews. For each of the mentioned events was brought to pass in the destruction of the first and second Temple, having been predicted and proclaimed in the said Psalms by Asaf" (transl. – slightly modified – from Ferrar 1920, 193). Instead, the observation that what is described in Psalm 78 took place in the time of Antiochus Epiphanes agrees with the interpretation he gives in the *Commentary on the Psalms*.

Alexandrian, in the context of a broader demonstration of the prophetic character of the content of the *Psalms*<sup>59</sup>.

What led Eusebius to restrict the interpretation of Ps 73 in the *Commentary on the Psalms* as realised *only* in the siege of Jerusalem in 70 CE is not, in my opinion, the need to distance himself from Origen's allegedly excessive allegorical interpretation, but rather the will to systematically apply a different point of view to the reading of the Psalter, aiming to identify with precision the repercussions in the concrete reality of what is proclaimed there, rather than spiritual teachings<sup>60</sup>. This perspective is confirmed by the fact that, even if Eusebius intends to explain a particular passage as relating to a historical event, in doing so he does not necessarily dismiss figurative interpretation altogether. For instance, Ps 73,13-14 is interpreted as figuratively referring to the passing of the Red Sea and the defeat of the Pharaoh and his generals (the *dragon* and *the heads of the dragon*)<sup>61</sup>.

This clarification explains, in my opinion, why Eusebius' exegesis appears to differ from Origen's one in its general traits but reveals nonetheless significant points of contact regarding single methodological modules. In this light, the bishop's desire to take a polemical distance from the Alexandrian cannot be a convincing explanation for such differences. As mentioned, the impact of Origen's methodology can already be seen in the way the Caesarean sets up his commentary, which always opens with an analysis of the title of the composition, if any, or noticing the reasons for its absence. This is often the occasion for some remarks on in whose person the words of the psalm are spoken. The analysis of 'the person speaking' (τὸ πρόσωπον λέγων) has been accurately highlighted as a fundamental contribution by the Alexandrian to Christian exegesis of the Psalter, on which also Eusebius regularly relies in his explanation of other psalms<sup>62</sup>.

It appears clear, however, that these methodological elements are declined according to a different sensibility. The use of the other versions of the Greek text collected by Origen in the *Hexapla* is rather striking. In the considered texts, the Alexandrian resorts to the other versions to notice the missing expression "you dried up rivers of Etham" in Ps 73,15b and to explain it, following the rendering by other translators as *ancient* (or *strong, vigorous, powerful*) *rivers*, as referring to prophets who stopped giving guidance to the Jewish people<sup>63</sup>. Commenting this same verse, Eusebius mentions the translations by Aquila and Symmachus, but does not include them in his interpretation, stating that the expression rather refers to the Jordan river which dried to let the Israelites pass<sup>64</sup>. Other times,

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<sup>59</sup> See Morlet 2009, 423-426.

<sup>60</sup> Further development on this point can be found in Interi 2022.

<sup>61</sup> Despite Eusebius' claim of having interpreted the passage to the letter (πρὸς τὴν λέξιν): Eus., *CPs* 73,12-18a (PG 23, 861C-864A), see texts *supra*.

<sup>62</sup> See Rondeau 1985, 40-71.99-135 (Origen), 169-195 (Eusebius); Perrone 2018, 144-147.

<sup>63</sup> Orig., *H73Ps* III 1 (GCS NF 19, 253): Σαφέστερον δὲ κατανοητέον περὶ τῶν τῷ λαῷ ἐκείνῳ συμβεβηκότων, περὶ οὗ γέγραπται· σὺ ἐξήρανας ποταμοὺς Ἡθὰμ (Ps 73,15b), ὅπερ οὐ κεῖται μὲν ἐν τοῖς ἀντιγράφοις τῶν Ἑβδομήκοντα· ἐν δὲ τῷ Ἑβραϊκῷ καὶ παρὰ τοῖς λοιποῖς εὗρομεν τὸν στίχον. Καὶ μὴ εἰδότες τί ἐστὶ ποταμοὺς Ἡθὰμ ἐξήρανας, ἀνέγνωμεν παρ' ἐνὶ τῶν ἐρμηνευσάντων ποταμοὺς ἀρχαίους· παρὰ δὲ ἐτέροις ποταμοὶ δὲ ἀρχαῖοι καὶ στερροὶ καὶ εὔτονοι καὶ δυνατοί, οἱ ἐν τοῖς προφήταις ῥεύσαντες, οὐχ ὅτι οὖν αὐτοὶ οἱ προφῆται ἐξηράνθησαν—τοῦτο γὰρ ἀπειρή ἡμᾶς λέγειν τὸ δύσσημον—· ἀλλ' ὅτι οἱ προφῆται Ἰουδαίων ἐπαύσαντο καὶ οὐκέτι προφῆται εἰσι παρ' αὐτοῖς. See Field 1875, 218, and the note in Perrone 2020, 499. On Origen's use of the Greek versions from the *Hexapla* for exegetical and philological purposes in the *Homilies on the Psalms* see Cacciari 2014. Note how Origen quickly glosses the expression *rod of your inheritance* (Ps 73,2b) with Symmachus' translation *sceptre of your inheritance* without pointing it out in *H73Ps* I 5 (GCS NF 19, 230): Ἐλυτρώσατο οὖν ὁ θεὸς ῥάβδον κληρονομίας αὐτοῦ (cf. Ps 73,2b), τουτέστι τὸ σκῆπτρον τῆς κληρονομίας αὐτοῦ καὶ βασιλείας ἐλυτρώσατο τὰ λύτρα δούς. See Field 1875, 216.

<sup>64</sup> Eus., *CPs* 73,12-18a (PG 23, 864A): Καὶ τὸ ἐπιλεγόμενον δὲ ἐν τῷ Σὺ ἐξήρανας ποταμοὺς Ἡθὰμ (Ps 73,15b) ἀναφέροιο ἂν ἐπὶ τὸν Ἰορδάνην, ὃν ἀποξηρανθέντα διήλθον ποσὶ μετὰ τὴν Μωσέως τελευτήν οἱ υἱοὶ Ἰσραὴλ, ἡγουμένου αὐτῶν Ἰησοῦ. Ἔστιν δὲ ὁ τρόπος περιλιπτικὸς ἀντὶ τοῦ ἐνικοῦ πληθυντικῶς προενηνεγμένου. Τὸ δὲ Ἡθὰμ, ὁ μὲν Ἀκύλας στερεοὺς ποταμοὺς ἡρμήνευσεν, ὁ δὲ Σύμμαχος ἀρχαίους. "And what is added in the passage *you dried up rivers of Etham*

however, the bishop recurs to the hexaplaric translations to expand and add details to his interpretation of a passage<sup>65</sup>.

The fact that the interpretations of the two authors do not overlap completely is also reflected in the lack of significant shared scriptural quotations in the explanation of the psalm. The only exceptions are Amos 8,10, cited regarding Ps 73,4a by both authors as a prophecy fulfilled in the impossibility for the Jewish people to celebrate their feasts after the destruction of the temple, and – Origen adds – because the figurative feasts of their provisional economy have been replaced by the real, Christian ones<sup>66</sup>; and Deut 32,8-9, which Origen quotes in reference to Ps 73,17a to show God’s distribution of the people on the earth<sup>67</sup>, while Eusebius links it to Ps 73,2b to clarify that God’s *inheritance* is Israel<sup>68</sup>. On an overall and non-systematic reading, it appears that Eusebius does use other quotations from scripture to argue or confirm his own interpretation. Nonetheless, rather than using parallel passages to weave a discourse of scriptural references – which, as Origen often does, explains the passage in a way that is often more articulate than the mere juxtaposition of the individual quotations<sup>69</sup> – Eusebius uses quotations from other books as precise evidence to support his own reading.

This brief comparison of Origen’s and Eusebius’ interpretation of Psalm 73, and in particular of the destruction of the temple of Jerusalem described therein, has firstly offered elements to deepen the relationship between the hermeneutics of the two authors. Secondly, it can now be argued more convincingly how, taking into account the different literary genres, it is not possible to characterise the exegesis of the Caesarean either in terms of a flattened repetition, or in terms of opposition to – or a departure from – Origen’s hermeneutic modules. For the Alexandrian, the evocation of the fall of Jerusalem takes on a moral value because of the analogy between the besieged city and the soul of the faithful attacked by the forces of evil. Explaining the psalm, Origen touches on a plurality of themes that nevertheless have their centre of gravity in his discourse on the spiritual life. For Eusebius, on the other hand, the siege of Jerusalem returns to have value mainly as a historical event that proves the validity of the apologetic *testimonium* of Ps 73. The bishop thus ascribes renewed importance to the concrete realisation of the prophecies contained in Scripture even at the level of historical reality, and not only – and above all – at the level of moral and intelligible reality, as was Origen’s main interest. In pursuing the explanation of the Psalter through this key of interpretation, he consciously uses the literary genre of the commentary and Origen’s methodology, declining it according to his sensitivity and the renewed demands of fourth-century Christianity.

Tommaso Interi

Dipartimento di Studi Storici

Università di Torino

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(Ps 73,15b) could be referred to the Jordan, which the children of Israel crossed on foot, once dried up, after the death of Moses, under the leadership of Joshua. And it is the collective trope, which refers to the plural instead of the singular. Aquila has translated *Etham* as *strong rivers*, while Symmachus *ancient*”.

<sup>65</sup> See e.g. Eus., *CPs* 73,2c-7 (PG 23, 856C-D), mentioned *supra*, where Eusebius quotes Symmachus’ clearer translation of Ps 73,4b-6 for it provides a more accurate description of the destruction of the temple. In the passages from other parts of the commentary I analysed I could find no relevant evidence of Eusebius’ use of the *Hexapla* for biblical textual criticism. Barthélemy 1971, 51-65 argues that Eusebius regards the versions as more explicit in terms of the spiritual meaning of the biblical text; this position has been substantially refuted and clarified by Morlet 2009, 550-552.

<sup>66</sup> See Orig., *H73Ps* I 8 (GCS NF 19, 234-235); Eus., *CPs* 73,2c-7 (PG 23, 857A-B). For Origen’s use of Amos 8,10 regarding the relationship between typology and truth, see Perrone 2020, 459-460.

<sup>67</sup> Orig., *H73Ps* III 4 (GCS NF 19, 257).

<sup>68</sup> Eus., *CPs* 73,1-2b (PG 23, 856B).

<sup>69</sup> See Munnich 2011.

Via Sant'Ottavio 20, I-10124

[tommaso.interi@unito.it](mailto:tommaso.interi@unito.it) / [tommaso.interi@hotmail.com](mailto:tommaso.interi@hotmail.com)

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Abstract ENG: This contribution focuses on Origen's and Eusebius' interpretation of Psalm 73, which evokes the destruction of the temple of Jerusalem. It highlights both the points in common and the differences between the two exegetes' approaches, arguing that their different perspectives are due to changed exegetical needs and sensibilities. Although Eusebius can be said to be a pupil of Origen in terms of the methodology and conception underlying his hermeneutics, he manifests a systematic interest in the fulfilment of the prophecies contained in the psalter, an aspect that Origen was only marginally interested in.

Keywords ENG: Origen of Alexandria, Eusebius of Caesarea, Christian Biblical exegesis, Psalms, Psalter, destruction of Jerusalem, Ps 73.

Riassunto ITA: Questo contributo si concentra sull'interpretazione di Origene e di Eusebio del Salmo 73, che evoca la distruzione del tempio di Gerusalemme. Mette in luce sia i punti in comune sia le differenze nell'approccio dei due esegeti, sostenendo che le loro diverse prospettive sono dovute a mutate esigenze e sensibilità esegetiche. Sebbene Eusebio possa dirsi allievo di Origene per quanto riguarda la metodologia e la concezione alla base della sua ermeneutica, egli manifesta un interesse sistematico per l'adempimento delle profezie contenute nel salterio, un aspetto a cui Origene era interessato solo marginalmente.

Parole chiave ITA: Origene di Alessandria, Eusebio di Cesarea, esegesi biblica cristiana, *Salmi*, Salterio, distruzione di Gerusalemme, Ps 73.